

The Liberal Mind

By William F. Buckley, Jr.

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In recent years, a number of important books and articles have been written, and important things thought and said about the Communist. What is he like? What goes on in his mind? What is he afraid of? How can we move him? How does he operate? What is he likely to do in this situation, or that one? How can we vanquish him here, contain him there, coexist with him over there? We haven't mastered the Communist temperament, or the Communist mind, true; much of the Communist remains inscrutable. But the progress we have made is vast. We have learned so much about this man, and about his movement that, I think it is safe to say, the Communist emerges as the most predictable political animal alive and active today.

One would think that, in this case, knowing the enemy is nine-tenths of the battle. After all, we are physically stronger than the Communists, and we firmly believe that our values are inherently superior to theirs.

Yet year in and year out we not only come in second in every lap of our mortal race with the Communists, we are made to look as though we had elected to race with balls and chains tied to our ankles, and blindfolds over our eyes.

Could it be that we have fundamentally misunderstood the Communists, with the result that, like the man with the shell game, they are able to fool us every time? Did we lose North Korea because the Communists upset all our careful calculations by acting atypically? Did we lose Indochina because the Communists pulled something out of the bag that no reasonable Westerner could possibly have anticipated? Do the Communists continue to have such strength in Italy and France because of an inventiveness so diabolically ingenious as to incapacitate the Western strategist? I believe not. As I say, I believe the Communist is a highly predictable creature. I believe that as the result of our tortuous journey into the recesses of the Communist mind, we have come close to understanding him.

But we do not understand the people charged with coping with the Commu-

nists, and they, quite evidently, do not understand the Communists. I believe that our most immediate challenge is to understand our leaders; and having understood them we must either dispossess them of power, or make them understand, or prepare to die. For our leaders, call them what you will—social democrats, Fabians, progressive moderates; I call them *Liberals*, and I spell that word with a capital "L"—are the unknown in the great equation.

I think it is easy to demonstrate that we know more about the workings of the mind of Nikolai Bulganin than we know about the workings of the mind of Dwight Eisenhower. For, while compared to one another with reference to almost any acceptable standard, one is a scoundrel and one relatively a saint—the life of Bulganin makes sense in a way that the life of Eisenhower does not.

A reviewer of my last book charged that in using the word *Liberal* I could only have in mind the clientele of *Nation* magazine. I have been careful in the past, and will continue to be, to be precise enough to defend myself easily against such a charge; so that when I talk about *Liberals* it is clear that I am not referring only to those frenzied malcontents who support the *Nation*, I have in mind the pleasant and pensive man who owns your local bookstore and fills his window full of the collected complaints of E. B. White, James Wechsler, and Elmer Davis, that good and lovable lady who regularly deserts her housewifely duties in the spring to help raise money for the United World Federalists, and the ambitious and orderly young man who works for a Wall Street broker and maps programs and draws up manifestoes for the Young Republican Club lamenting our age of suspicion. I don't mean to imply that there is no such thing as the sinister, the guileful, or the treacherous Liberal; there are many; but the majority are in most respects good and amiable and talented people.

So I am not talking about an unruly little eddy. When I talk about modern Liberalism I am talking about the main-

stream of contemporary political and philosophical thought, the swollen and irrepressible stream fed for so many years by the waters of rationalism, positivism, Marxism, and utopianism.

As regards contemporary American controversies, the Liberal is likely to feel that Owen Lattimore has been unjustly persecuted and that our loyalty program has become an instrument of right-wing conformity. He tends to believe that the Bricker Amendment is a reactionary plot to immobilize the executive branch of government. He is easily persuaded that Senator McCarthy represents today the same kind of threat that Adolf Hitler held out to the Germans twenty years ago. And whatever little disagreements they have in their own ranks, the Liberals unite to honor their heroes. In law it is Oliver Wendell Holmes; in education and philosophy it is John Dewey; in politics it is Franklin Roosevelt.

The picture I have drawn of the Liberal is, of course, fragmentary and inconclusive. It has only the purpose of giving a general idea of just who it is I am talking about, of dispelling the notion that when I talk about a *Liberal* I could only be referring to mental spastics such as Nye Bevan or Agnes Meyer.

PERILS OF THE LIBERAL MIND

Then we cannot survive unless we understand our own leaders—the ruling elite of the Western world—the *Liberals*.

I urge therefore that those who are competent to do so set out, as a matter of urgent concern to us all, to explore the *Liberal* mind. I myself have neither the patience, the skills, nor the trepidation to embark upon so frightening an adventure. As of this moment I am merely reporting on what I can see from here, aware that the distance that separates me and my target may result in illu-

(Continued on Page 52)

The Liberal Mind

(Continued from Page 6)

sions and distortions and oversimplifications.

Aware of these limitations then, I nevertheless venture upon a short analysis of the Liberal mind. And I shall argue that it is indispensable to a knowledge of that mind to recognize that there is an enormous area in which the Liberal does not know how to think. More specifically: he is illogical, he is inconsistent, and he cannot assess evidence.

Several years ago, I wrote a critique of modern education—specifically, of Yale education—for which I now feel I must, in part, apologize. I apologize not so much for the irrelevance of the indictment as for its incompleteness. Almost all of my critics intoned that Yale—that Liberal education—attempts to teach students not *what* to think, but *how* to think. And I used to answer them with some such observation as that my ignorant but decent delivery man is a far better citizen of the world, to use a term that engages the rapt and respectful attention of all Liberals, than the chairman of the department of philosophy of Moscow University who—make no mistake about it—is not ignorant. I still maintain that this is a sufficient answer, but I shall never forgive myself for being so easily duped as to accept uncritically the premise that the Liberals are, indeed, successfully teaching American students how to think. I should have come back at my critics—it would have been easy—by demonstrating that not only does modern education tend to teach you to think what you ought *not* to think, it also fails to teach you *how* to think.

There isn't space for many examples of the Liberal mind at work on a logical problem, so let me attempt just one or two.

Some months ago, I suggested on a television program that symbolic of the sluggishness of the collective Liberal anti-Communist effort is the fact that should Eleanor Roosevelt meet Senator McCarthy at a cocktail party she would probably refuse to shake hands with him, whereas she would almost as surely shake Vishinsky's hand at the same party. A day or two later a reporter asked her, How about it? Indignantly she answered that she would shake hands with both Vishinsky and McCarthy at any future social affair, that in the past she had once shaken McCarthy's hand (this was evidently a vivid memory), and that was that.

Not quite, however; for a month or two later she was asked in her regular question-and-answer column in *Ladies Home Journal*, "In a recent column

you defended your right to shake hands with Mr. Vishinsky, and Senator McCarthy. Would you also have felt it was right to shake hands with Adolf Hitler?"

Replied Mrs. Roosevelt (not, I think, after anything but the intensest intellectual effort to solve that one), "In Adolf Hitler's early days I might have considered it, but after he had begun his mass killings I don't think I could have borne it."

I suggest that any effort to understand Mrs. Roosevelt's code on when it is permissible to shake someone's hand is very difficult if one has reference to these statements. If we were to set up a syllogism, here is how it would look:

Proposition A: E. R. will not shake hands with those who are guilty of mass killings.

Proposition B: E. R. will shake hands with Vishinsky.

Conclusion: Vishinsky is not guilty of mass killings.

But even Mrs. Roosevelt knows that he is—or was, rather. So what was she



—Wide World Photos
Andrei Vishinsky, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt,
and Adolf Hitler.

trying to say? Was she trying to say that there are significant differences between Hitler and Vishinsky? If so, with reference to what system of ethics, or what system of logic, do these differences emerge? The only explanation Mrs. Roosevelt attempts is that "after Hitler had begun his mass killings," then she couldn't bear it. But not only has she been able to bear to shake hands and drink cocktails with the first-ranking butcher of the Soviet Union, she has found it bearable to talk with him, as a co-aspirant, about drafting a mutually satisfactory declaration of human rights!

It is much too easy to accept, on the basis of this performance, the explanation that Eleanor Roosevelt is anti-Nazi but pro-Communist. But that is not the answer. Eleanor Roosevelt is *not* pro-Communist. She just doesn't know how to think. Not even potentially, I should say. She is one of the people to whom Pythagoras could *not* have explained about his triangle.

It may be objected that generalizations about the Liberal mind based on anything that comes out of Mrs. Roosevelt are invalid. I disagree. The index to the intellectual sensitivity of a person

is not only what comes out of him, but what he puts up with from others. Has anyone here ever heard any stentorian voice from Liberaldom register dismay at this or any other of the intellectual monstrosities mothered by this woman?

No: Mrs. Roosevelt is a certified Liberal, and I know of no one who refuses to acknowledge her license as a spokesman for American Liberalism. In quoting her I do not pretend to be quoting from a first-ranking Liberal scholar or philosopher; but I do ask why first-ranking Liberal scholars and philosophers and thoughtful laymen countenance her. It must be either because (a) they are aware that Mrs. Roosevelt's close personal and political association with her husband invested her with a glamor which is highly utilitarian, or (b), (and this is both more plausible and more charitable), not knowing themselves how to think, they are incompetent to recognize that Mrs. Roosevelt does not know how to think.

However farfetched this explanation may appear, how else do you account for it? The Liberal community never seems to have enough of her. Colleges stand in line to award her honorary degrees; she is forever speaking to any group on the subject of anything, and her annual books are snuggled close to the Liberal bosom. Only very, very seldom do they meet up with condign punishment. This happened with Mrs. Roosevelt's last book, which was unfortunate enough to fall into the hands of a man who *does* know how to think, Professor James Burnham.

Wrote Mr. Burnham:

In *India and the Awakening East*, Mrs. Roosevelt was able to complete her flower-strewn march unpricked by the thorns of reason....

Like all her writing, the contents and prose of this book avoid excessive demands on her readers. In crossing from the Arab lands into Israel she has in one striking way a curious experience: the population, she finds, is predominantly Jewish....

In another passage she tells us about Mr. Sudhir Ghosh, whose enthusiasm inspires one with confidence! What is a rational being to make of such a phrase? Enthusiasm inspires one with confidence? By the record, Hitler was the most enthusiastic man of our time, and Father Coughlin, Mao, Huey Long, and Lenin are not far behind. So therefore? But the phrase is of course not rational, nor the expression of reason....

This furious energy, to which a gigantic ego frantically clings... is like a great tank with a drunken driver, loose in the crowded streets of a city. It is the onrush of sentiment, unguided and unrestrained by intelligence, reason, or principle. Over whatever subject, problem, plan, or issue Mrs. Roosevelt touches, she spreads a squidlike ink of directionless feeling. All distinctions are blurred, all analysis fouled, and in that murk clear thought is forever impossible.

Still — Mrs. Roosevelt is one woman, and there are many Liberals, so, properly, we must move on.

BIT OF AMERICANA!

Rather than to quote, at this point, a single Liberal spokesman, let me quote virtually all of them. Let me quote the president of the League of Women Voters of Middletown, Indiana, the book reviewer of the country weekly, the minister of the local church, the professor of politics at Harvard University, and the editor of the *New York Times*:

QUOTE: *The fact remains that not one conviction has resulted from the activities of Senator McCarthy.* It follows that his career has been useless.

I submit that this bit of Americana is as representative a *Liberal* statement as any in our history—and that it tells us rather a lot about the Liberals' capacity for logical and meaningful thought. Allow me to analyze it by quoting Senator McCarthy himself. Let me quote a few paragraphs from his testimony last summer before the Jenner Committee on congressional investigating procedures. I quote now from a man who above all others, the Liberals assure us, knows neither how to think, nor what to think. Bearing this in mind, compare the quality of thought in the ensuing words with that embodied in the daily anti-McCarthy editorial or speech we all read or hear:

Let me, at this point, [said Senator McCarthy to the Jenner Committee] address myself to another prominent misapprehension, the effects of which beat down upon me and our committee as regularly as the sun rises. That is the eternal war whoop: How many convictions have you gotten? Not many? Then it follows that your work has been either unnecessary or incompetent.

It is not the function of a congres-

sional committee to get either indictments or convictions. Frequently, committee work does lead down the path to the Justice Department. But convictions most often result from the activities of those committees that address themselves to out-and-out lawbreaking—to graft, corruption, income tax evasion, etc.

In the field of security, an indictment or a conviction is extremely hard to get—not because there are, say, fewer Communists in this country than there are income tax evaders. [But] a successful Communist is precisely that person who is skilled in throwing you and me off his tracks. In self-defense, then, it became the policy of the federal government to weed out of government all persons about whose loyalty there is a reasonable doubt—not just those persons who can definitely be established to be agents of the Soviet Union.

The government does not go on to prosecute, nor should it—nor could it under the Constitution—the federal employee about whose loyalty there is merely a reasonable doubt: it is satisfied to dismiss him from federal service. It has been my principal concern, over the past years, to rout *security risks* out of government and defense industries.

My chief concern has not been, in other words, to bring to trial those responsible for espionage and policy sabotage that has already been committed, but rather to prevent future espionage and policy sabotage. Every time a security risk is ejected from a sensitive agency of government or a defense plant, a step has been taken to guard against the possibility of future espionage. It is not as glamorous or as spectacular to prevent a future Alger Hiss from changing the course of history at a future Yalta as it is to detect an Alger Hiss who did change the course of history at a past Yalta.

But I am more interested in preventing future Yaltas than in punishing those to blame for past ones—even if this means that I am not in a position to dangle a welter of scalps in the faces of my critics who, for a reason I cannot hope to

understand, seem to be saying that my activities and those of our committee are not justified unless we produce a daily quota of traitors who have *already* stabbed this nation in the back. It is not enough, it seems, that we are devoting ourselves to insuring, as best we can, that she shall not be stabbed in the back at some future moment.

There is more depth, more attention to logical process, and a greater respect for intelligence in these few paragraphs than in volumes on the subject by the most expensive Liberal educators, editors, and publicists.

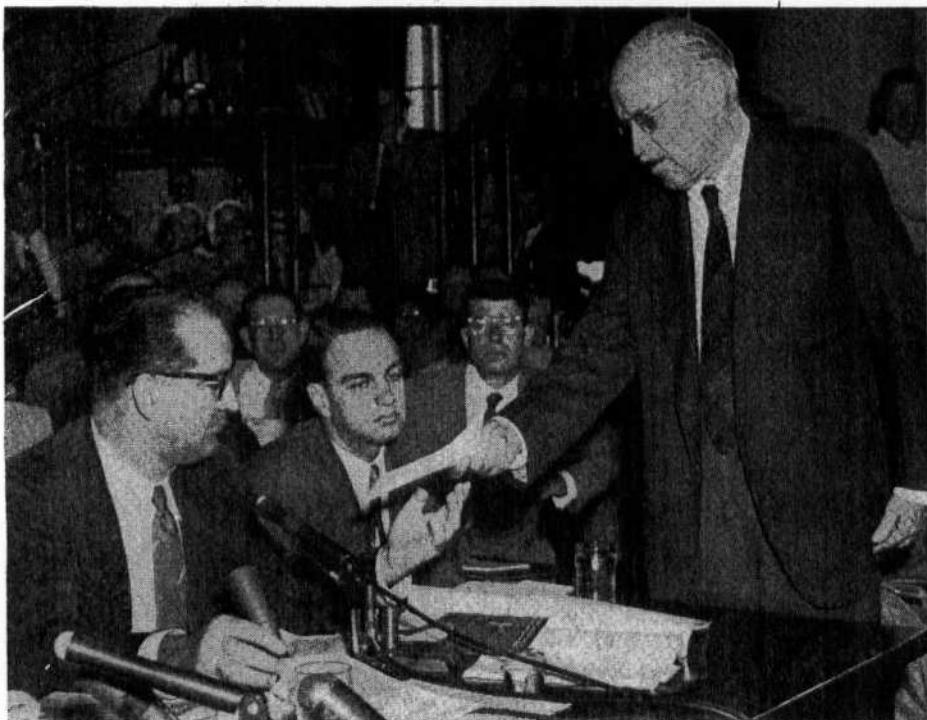
I have given just a few illustrations of representative *Liberal* logic, and move now to an examination of another category of *Liberal* thinking, still under the broad heading of irrationality.

HOBGOBLIN OF LITTLE MINDS!

I have on several occasions heard Liberals patronizingly dismiss any complaint about their inconsistencies by quoting Ralph Waldo Emerson, I think it was, who remarked that "a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds." Emerson was right; but not so the Liberals who lean on him so heavily. If today we write a check on insufficient funds, it would be foolish indeed if in the future we were to bemoan the "inconsistency" involved in writing checks on existing deposits. Nor can any reasonable member of this community criticize a regenerated Louis Budenz for the inconsistency of opposing, in 1954, the same dictatorship of the proletariat he supported so ardently in 1944.

Just the same, consistency is not a supernumerary virtue. For basically, consistency is justice, and therefore the inconsistent man, or the man who tolerates or supports inconsistency, is an unjust man. The law, for example, seeking justice, metes out the same penalty for the same offense. The society that sentences one drunkard to twenty-four hours in jail and another to the electric chair is unjust and could expect no quarter from Mr. Emerson; but this is the kind of inconsistency that, due to the curious workings of his mind, time and again the Liberal is guilty of.

An example or two: Senator Ralph Flanders gets up on the floor of the Senate and asks whether or not an unnatural relationship between Roy Cohn and David Schine and Senator McCarthy doesn't satisfactorily explain their behavior throughout the Army episode. Good show, the Liberals seem to say, in unison; and immediately the wheels turn, the sabres flash, and before you know it our publicists have ground out a new folk hero—the granite-faced, jut-jawed, tough-talking New England dragon-killer; Edward Murrow's taut face momentarily relaxes as he smiling contemplates the essential goodness of man and democracy, and the sophisticated and calloused National Press Club in Washington breaks precedent to give



—Wide World Photo

Senator Ralph Flanders (right) hands Sen. Joe McCarthy written notice that he will attack him on the Senate floor. The presentation was made during Senate probe of the McCarthy-Army dispute.

Senator Flanders a standing ovation.

One reporter was so uncouth as to press the matter, asking Senator Flanders to crystallize his charges: Are you, said the reporter, are you saying that these men are perverts? Certainly not, said the Senator: I am merely asking questions.

Let us take a hypothetical situation. Tomorrow, President Eisenhower authorizes our ambassador in Japan to consent to limited trade between Japan and Red China. Senator McCarthy gets up on the floor and suggests that the action of the President is satisfactorily explained if one assumes he is a member of the Communist party. To those who immediately roar out their indignation he says, simply: I'm not accusing the President of being a Communist. I'm just asking questions . . .

It is as simple as that. Flanders can get away with something McCarthy, or Jenner, or Taft, or Knowland could never get away with. The Liberal community deals differently with the same offense, depending on who commits it and against whom it is committed.

A year ago Senator McCarthy said to a general in the United States Army, "Any general who says 'I will protect another general who protected Communists' is not fit to wear that uniform." The Liberal community fairly exploded with outrage. For General Zwicker had been decorated for bravery. (Anyone decorated for bravery, the Liberal seems to be saying, cannot, no matter what he subsequently does, be considered as unfit to wear a uniform. But it is not the irrelevance of this defense of General Zwicker that concerns us, here in a discussion of Liberal inconsistency.)

A Senate committee recommended McCarthy be censured for that one, and the Senate came mighty close to acting on the committee's recommendations. It didn't, finally; but its refusal to do so enraged the Liberals, one and all; we are guilty of letting down a man who has fought valiantly for his country, they said; so in their own minds, they censured McCarthy for this outrage.

A month or so after McCarthy had thus spoken to Zwicker, another legislator paid his respects, face to face, to another man with a distinguished background of military service, a fellow legislator. This congressman was decorated during the first world war with the Distinguished Service Cross, the Distinguished Service Medal, and the Purple Heart; he was awarded the Croix de Guerre with palm, he was cited for bravery by Marshal Petain, by General Edward, by General Hale, and by General Lewis. His name is B. Carroll Reece, and the assault upon him was made by Congressman Wayne Hays during a committee hearing over which Reece was presiding:

Hays: I will say this to (you) . . . that

out where I come from we have a saying that if a man double-crosses you once, that is his fault; if he double-crosses you twice, that is your fault. I just want you to know you won't get the second opportunity.

Reece: . . . there is no living man can justifiably say that . . . (I) have ever double-crossed anybody or . . . failed to keep . . . (my) word.

Hays: I am saying both . . . is that clear enough? There is no inference there, is there?

Reece: That does not disturb me a particle.

Hays: I know. You are pretty hard to disturb. I thought they had more guts in Tennessee.

As far as I know, there has not been a single editorial in the *New York Times* urging that Congressman Hays be censured, not one manifesto from the committee for an effective Congress, nor an extra million dollars appropriated by the Fund for the Republic to look into the threat of "Haysism." In fact, I know of not one Liberal, prominent or not, who has suggested censure or even a mild reprimand. The best I could get out of Liberal publicist George Hamilton Combs—whose fulminations over the Zwicker incident shattered steel and concrete—and that only after suasion, cajolery, and threats, was that "perhaps Mr. Hays' conduct was a little undisciplined." And this, of course, is why: In the one case it was an outsider who was being abusive; in the other it was a fellow Liberal who, what is more, was engaged in obstructing an inquiry into the ideological bases of the great foundations, which, because they are virtually all run by Liberals, are by definition not investigable.

I submit that if McCarthy were to use such language as Hays used on the chairman of any committee of which he is a member, or were to employ such tactics, he would be run out of Washington with wet towels. Certainly he would activate the otherwise listless editorial writers of the *New York Times*.

NOT A WASHABLE EXPLANATION!

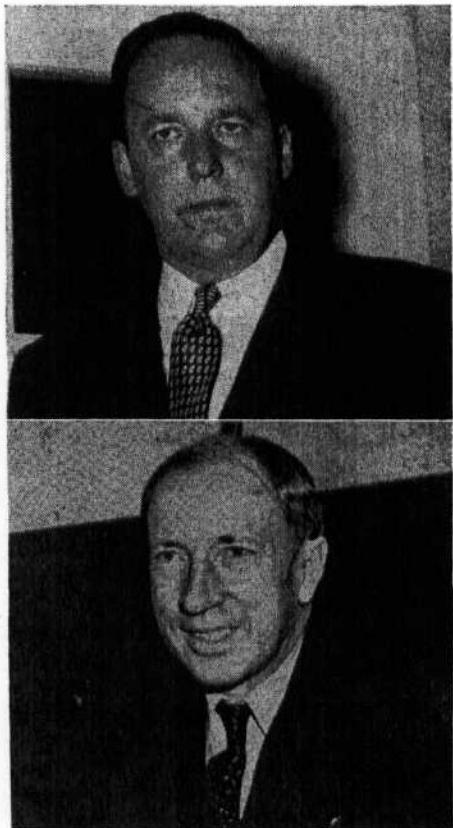
It is possible to maintain that such inconsistencies as these, and a thousand others that could readily be enumerated, reflect not on the Liberal mind, but on the Liberal temperament. Everyone loses control of himself, after all; and in the heat of the occasion we are all likely to apply one set of standards to those we approve of and another to those we do not.

I believe that such an explanation does not wash. For one thing, no human being loses his temper as often as a Liberal is inconsistent. And anyway, most Liberals are icy men who think in refrigerated offices, where passion is not admitted. Who ever heard of Walter Lippmann being carried away? No, I submit that the inconsistency of the Liberal is traceable neither to unbridled

emotion nor to opportunism—but rather to his fundamental incapacity to think objectively. What I am saying is most of the time the Liberal doesn't know he's being inconsistent, doesn't know he's being unjust. He is so built that he cannot in a controversy in which he is committed, see the parallels in two situations; he moves not by reason but by instinct; he is the man who is truly prejudiced; for he consistently pre-judges men and situations. The certified *Liberal* — the Eleanor Roosevelt, the Wayne Hays — cannot err; in going after Roy Cohn and Joseph McCarthy and Carroll Reece they cannot stumble, therefore they do not stumble, therefore the decent, the well disposed and the industrious of the community can give them their unthinking support; which is the type of support the Liberal characteristically extends.

Lack of objectivity leads to inconsistency, but it betrays, also, an incapacity to assess evidence; and this is the third aspect of the Liberal's irrationality.

The first illustration that comes to mind here is the most obvious, perhaps even the most written about. I mean, of course, our putative reign of terror. I haven't the energy to catalogue, once again, sample *Liberal* statements about our reign of terror, not even the more hilarious ones about how we go to jail if we read Thomas Jefferson, or get starved out by the American Legion if



—Wide World Photos

Congressmen Wayne L. Hays (D-Ohio), above, and B. Carroll Reece (R-Tenn.) were central figures in a heated exchange during a House committee hearing which Reece headed.

we buy an English car. What I am getting at is neatly and simply synthesized in just one magazine piece by one author—Robert Maynard Hutchins, writing for *Look* magazine last spring. It was an orthodox reign-of-terror piece, climaxed by the assertion that it was no longer safe to give money to Harvard University.

Now here is a man who at the age of twenty-eight was appointed Dean of the Yale Law School, and who by the time he was thirty was recognized as such an articulate and important critic of American education that he was handed a whole university to experiment with, which he did, for twenty years or so. He ripped the curriculum to pieces; he swept away academic cobwebs; he instituted new courses, wiped out others; he brought in new professors and fired football coaches, and resurrected great books; and throughout it all he swore by all the gods that he meant to do one thing: He meant to educate. He meant to teach his students how to think.

And thirty years later, while still upholding his educational theories against all comers, he writes this kind of foolishness about the world we live in. Knowing of his respect for Plato, I wonder if Plato's dictum that the educated man is one who can "see things as they are" doesn't make him fidgety. Or whether, given his respect for Descartes, who said, *I think therefore I am*, Mr. Hutchins can even be sure he exists. After finishing that article in *Look*, bearing in mind Mr. Hutchins' pretensions, I could imagine anything—could imagine Lucky Luciano writing a book about how to live one's life at peace with one's God and one's neighbor, or a 250-pound lady lecturing on her patented formula for keeping thin. Surely to bring in Mr. Hutchins to head a university which proposes to teach students how to *think* is like bringing in as chief pilot for Pan American Airways a man with St. Vitus' dance.

I exaggerate, you feel. I oversimplify. But I don't. I maintain that there isn't a dialectical magician in this country—or even one in England—who can prove I am wrong in concluding that the man who points to that ceiling and says "That is a cumulus cloud" is blind; and I say that the man who reports that there is a reign of terror on in this country cannot assess evidence, cannot, for all intents and purposes, think; and that's the shoe that fits Robert Hutchins, who has been given fifteen million dollars by the Ford Foundation to prove that war is peace, slavery is freedom, hysteria is sanity.

PUBLIC PROTESTS DEMANDED A SCALP

One or two other illustrations of the incapacity of the Liberal to assess evidence, and I must move on to other characteristics of his mind. One thinks im-



—Wide World Photo
Robert M. Hutchins

mediately of the J. B. Matthews episode.

In an article of a series which described the Communist penetration of our institutions, Mr. Matthews came, in due course, to our churches. And he began his article on them by making a purely statistical observation which he backed up in the body of the article itself by listing the names of many of the unfortunate clergymen who had associated themselves, for the most part during a period of moral and intellectual blackout, with one or more Communist enterprises.

The article in question was written for a conservative magazine, thus quite a while elapsed before anyone read it. But then someone did, and there was hell to pay for this assault on Christianity which, incredibly, is what it grew to be after the Liberals were through with it. A senator of the United States said, publicly, "When someone makes charges so foul, he ought to have the courage to name names." Our Liberal leaders fell all over each other making public protests, and demanding J. B. Matthews' scalp. Inevitably, it was delivered unto them. Only then did the Liberals feel that the crisis was past, that they could go back and preach about how ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

The afternoon that I heard that J. B. Matthews was fired—without a hearing, without any specific challenge to any of the data on the basis of which he made his generalization—that afternoon I felt the Liberals were through. The meaning of the J. B. Matthews episode would suddenly dawn upon the community, and never again, no never, not even at college commencements, could any of these people talk about—how does it go? "We shall seek the truth and endure the consequences?"—or about the presumption of innocence, or about a fair hearing, or about hysteria—with-out sending the audience into gales of

laughter. I expected, and I am quite serious, that the social significance of the slogan, "Remember J. B. Matthews," would far outweigh in history, the military significance of the war-cry, "Remember the Alamo."

The mistake I made is obvious, and will probably strike most of my readers as childish. I had assumed that the Liberals would recognize that they had sinned; and that having done so, they would repent and reform. How innocent I was. For the most part, they do not know—to this day—the meaning of what they did. And the balance, those who know, don't care. To say "Remember J. B. Matthews!" to a *Liberal* audience communicates about as much as "Dig that crazy mixed-up square" would to a group of Oxford dons.

A final word about the Liberal and objective evidence. The research of the past ten years has made it literally impossible to uphold, rationally, the position that an attack by the Japanese, in one form or another, came in 1941 as a complete surprise to President Roosevelt and his close associates. But no evidence—of any kind—will alter the *Liberal* version of Pearl Harbor. Neither cleft mountains, separated seas, nor signs in the sky testifying to the truth will shake the Liberals' faith in Mr. Roosevelt as a "first principle," or their belief in his infallibility and omniscience as its corollaries. Not even a Liberal himself, not even an illustrious one, can do anything about this intellectual commitment. Charles Beard tried it, and they hounded him out of public life. What goes on, I asked a shrewd man, after reading a bitter excoriation of Beard by one of the court historians over at Columbia University in 1947. "It's as simple as this," he told me, "The greatest historian of our time has tackled the greatest politician of our time. There's no doubt about who is going to win."

To sum up. When the *Liberal* thinks, he tends to think illogically. He tends, moreover, to be inconsistent, and to ignore any evidence that fails to harmonize with the verdict he proposes at all cost to support.

Such are the qualifications of our intellectual elite.

THE "ARMCHAIR" LIBERAL

Another fundamental characteristic of the Liberal mind, related to and perhaps responsible for some of its inconsistencies, is intolerance. The storied Liberal who reposes in his armchair and reviews, conscientiously, kindly, ungrudgingly, the parade of ideas that differ from his own, bears very little resemblance to the dogmatic, trigger-happy Liberal of today. The Liberal today makes of intolerance a way of life. Having prescribed the limits within which political discussion may safely go forward, he enforces those limits by

ruthless and unscrupulous persecution of nonconformity.

Certain ideas, the Liberal seems to be saying, cannot reasonably or morally be held by men who live in the twentieth century. No one, for example, may hold that a federal system of social security is unwarranted or unwise. No one may question the value of a progressive income tax either as an instrument of money-raising, or as a social equalizer. No one can oppose a Federal Fair Employment Practices Act; no one can question the right of labor unions to bargain on an industry-wide basis; and no one, without losing his chastity, may inquire into the validity of the institution known as "academic freedom." These are just a few of the taboos, of course, and they are mentioned only for illustration.

Largely, I suppose, because by the time his mind has developed it is conditioned to overlook evidence which supports conclusions different from his own, the Liberal fights hard and wantonly against those who hold such views. And the weapons he feels entitled to use, in behalf of Liberalism, are those whose use by others shocks and enrages him. A few weeks ago I saw a copy of the following letter, which I quote in its entirety:

Dear Ken:

I thought I wrote you once before asking you to take me off the mailing list of your disgusting communication. It does not give me any pleasure to find in my mail a copy of a letter to Senator Jenner, who is so obviously disloyal to everything that America stands for, and a letter, moreover, which so clearly indicates the same kind of disloyalty in its writer.

Sincerely,
JOSEPH ALSOP

Notice that Senator Jenner is not "mistaken," he is not "stupid," he is not "ignorant," he is "disloyal." More disloyal than John Carter Vincent, John Paton Davies, John Stewart Service, J. Robert Oppenheimer, and heaven only knows how many security risks Alsop has written tear-drenched and venomous columns in defense of.

Let me put it this way. I don't think either John Carter Vincent or William E. Jenner ought to be spoken of as disloyal even in the diluted sense in which (let us by all means assume) Alsop was using that word in his nasty letter to his cousin (Ken's his cousin). And I know that Mr. Alsop agrees with me, for he has often, over the years, expressed his contempt and anger for those who use that word lightly. What I should like to know is why he feels free to refer to Senator Jenner as disloyal? But we will never know. We will never know, I fear, what it is that makes Liberals that way; but we must know that they are that way; we must know that the hatred that they feel for anyone who disagrees with them twists their minds and poisons their hearts, and that beneath the suave

and urbane exteriors that these worldly men exhibit in public and in private there are storms raging that rock any attempt at seasoned and calm and open-minded thought in any area in which they are deeply committed.

Let me quote from the *Congressional Record* of May 14 of last year. A Senator got up and addressed the chair as follows: "Mr. President," he said, "I wish, for the record, to correct a lie printed in the *Washington Post* of this morning. The lie is carried in the column of the unsavory character called"—but let's not identify the columnist at this moment.

The Senator then went on to quote the statement to which he objected—a statement which spoke of a political alliance in the Senator's home state. Said the Senator: "The writer, of course, knew when he wrote this falsehood that it was false, for he originated it... I should like to suggest to the *Washington Post* that it should not permit its pages to be used for the continuing dissemination of lies manufactured by this man. Furthermore, I think it owes it to its readers to make a thorough investigation of the past record of this man and to publish it, so that all who are subjected to his propaganda may know the character and reliability of its source... it is impossible" to discover the truth "when the pages of the press are permeated with deliberate lies."

Well, well. Who do you suppose this columnist is? This brazen liar, this unscrupulous troublemaker? Several names come to mind. Was it Ilya Ehrenburg or Gerald L. K. Smith? It wasn't, of course; it wasn't Drew Pearson, either. It was George Sokolsky—perhaps the most sober, and reliable, and certainly the most courteous political columnist in the United States today. And who do you suppose made such a savage attack on Sokolsky? It was none other than

J. William Fulbright, the loftiest Liberal in the Senate, the idol of the *Liberal* community, who through a vast program of international scholarships has struck mighty blows in behalf of World Understanding and Tolerance. It's the Robert Hutchins story all over again. Get yourself educated so you'll learn to know we're living under a reign of terror. Get yourself educated so that when you grow up you'll be tolerant like Senator Fulbright and know enough to recognize a pathological and perverted liar like George Sokolsky when you see one.

Note, too, Senator Fulbright's call for (a) an investigation of George Sokolsky (how ironic from a man who has, in effect, so diligently opposed investigations of men and groups which, some people think, pose rather a greater threat than does George Sokolsky); and note how Senator Fulbright is (b) calling on the *Washington Post* to drop George Sokolsky's column from its pages. For years the *Post* has run the outpourings of a man who indeed is—and can be demonstrated to be—a practiced liar. I mean Drew Pearson, of course. But Drew Pearson generally lies in behalf of Liberals, and against conservatives; he doesn't, therefore, excite the opposition of Senator Fulbright. But George Sokolsky does—because he is a conservative, and because some of his views fall outside the limits of tolerable opinion. That, and only that—nothing more—can explain the character of this frenzied outbreak of the former president of the University of Arkansas.

A CHOICE EXERCISE IN BOOK BURNING

As revealing an illustration as any I know of the determination of the Liberal to translate his intolerance into binding social rules which would have the effect of reading out of the community all dissent from the Liberal position—is contained in a recent column in the *New York Herald Tribune* by radio and TV-man John Crosby.

One day last May he devoted his column to the television program, *Author Meets the Critics*. He started out by denouncing Admiral Theobald, whose book, *The Final Secret of Pearl Harbor*, had been discussed on that program the night before. Admiral Theobald's charges were—I quote Crosby—"fantastic." "The Pearl Harbor attack has been the object of eight separate investigations," said Mr. Crosby, "which produced literally tons of testimony, evidence and opinion. There are no new facts in the Theobald book—*how could there be?*" (you see here a first-rate illustration of what I mean when I say that the Liberal postulates the correctness of his position and then—at this point quite logically—goes on to deduce that all factual data, known or unknown, must by definition support his position); there are no new facts, there are "only new and, according to all reliable



—Wide World Photo

J. B. MATTHEWS



—Wide World Photos

George Sokolsky (left) and Sen. J. William Fulbright.

historians, absolutely unwarranted conclusions as to the motives of the President of the United States." Note, again, "according to all reliable historians." If this means anything, it means, very simply, that no one who differs from the Liberals—from Mr. Crosby if you like—is reliable. It means literally nothing else, because surely there are no other grounds for calling, say, Charles Tansill, Harry Elmer Barnes, or Charles Beard "unreliable" historians.

And then Mr. Crosby came to the heart of the matter. He certainly wasn't going to waste one whole column simply denouncing Admiral Theobald. That would be just destructive criticism. Crosby wanted to be constructive. He wanted to see to it that Admiral Theobalds didn't happen again. So he comes out and says it—"But what is such a book doing on *Author Meets the Critics* . . . ? The program is on the air only once a week and consequently it can take on, at most, only fifty-two books a year....

"You would think that *Author Meets the Critics* would tackle only those books which a consensus of the critics agreed were the best to come along . . . "

A consensus of the critics. Reliable critics, that is. Liberals.

Not only has Mr. Crosby in just so many words completed one of the choicest exercises in contemporary book burning, he probably doesn't, to this day, know, and I doubt if he will know it on the day he dies, he doesn't know what he did. Because, for the most part, the Liberals know not what they do.

Let me give a final illustration of this sort of thing. Everybody has been doing rather a lot of talking lately about the great foundations, due largely to the filing of the report of Carroll Reece's investigating committee.

It has been proved that there has been a measure of Communist infiltration of the foundations, true, but very little of it, as the Reece report indicates. What there has been, demonstrably, is wholesale infiltration of the foundations by American Liberals, so much of it that, it is fair to say, the Liberals today dominate the major foundations in America.

Now for some reason, a statement as straightforward as the one I have just made outrages the Liberals. Particularly if one goes on from here to point out that much of the money spent by these

Liberal-controlled foundations has in the past and, predictably, will in the future be used in pursuit of Liberal goals, and that these goals are definable.

Suppose I were to set up a foundation, and that I named as president of that foundation John T. Flynn, as secretary George Sokolsky, as treasurer Fulton Lewis, Jr., and as corresponding secretary Westbrook Pegler. Suppose someone referred to my foundation as *conservative*. If I objected to this description, wouldn't I be considered a lunatic? "Of course that's a conservative foundation," all reasonable men would agree. And since dollars don't spend themselves, checks don't write themselves out, and grants are not made to those who pick the winner of the Irish Sweepstakes, *somebody* will have to spend those dollars, *somebody* will have to write out those checks, and *somebody* will have to select the recipients of that grant. And that *somebody* will bring his values along when he makes these decisions, and, inevitably, the foundation will take on the political and philosophical flavor of the men who run it.

Now I maintain that all *reasonable* men must by the same token agree that any organization whose central figures are Robert Hutchins, Paul Hoffman, Clifford Case, and Elmer Davis is as demonstrably Liberal as my hypothetical foundation would be, demonstrably, conservative. It follows that all those who refuse to acknowledge this are unreasonable men as, indeed, I have been contending, Liberals by and large are. But not only do the Liberals refuse to concede any such thing about any of these foundations, they viciously and ruthlessly harass and boycott any foundation that devotes as much as *half* of its time to presenting the conservative view. This, basically, is at the heart of *Liberal* opposition to Facts Forum. Facts Forum, which is staffed to a recognizable degree by conservatives, nevertheless devotes half of its resources to putting forward the Liberal view. But the other half of the time it presents the conservative view—and this is not permissible, as any Liberal will tell you, in his sleep.

This intolerance takes on, inevitably, a most serious shape. It becomes, as we have seen, the agent of book burning, of the suppression of free speech and research. It becomes also the agent of political authoritarianism. I have often followed the lead of Mr. Eugene Lyons in using the descriptive adjective *totalitarian* immediately in front of the word *Liberal*, and I was not just name-calling. I have meant that the Liberal movement has totalitarian tendencies, and I mean it now when I contend that the Liberal is basically undemocratic. He is basically against coexistence—with anyone on his *right*. And the triumph of his intolerance is the virtual disappear-

ance of the two-party system.

I first caught on to the Liberal political game many years, I am certain, after most of you did. It happened to me rather suddenly, in the spring of 1950, after reading an article in the *New York Times Magazine* called "The Need for an Intelligent Opposition." The article was written by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. He was reading not only the Republican party and its leaders, but all conservatives as well, a little lecture, the gist of which was this: We *Liberals*, said Schlesinger, think it's important for you conservatives to be around. It gets stagnant otherwise; it keeps us on our toes to have to cope with you. We're all for you.

There's only one thing, though, he added. And that is, you must be intelligent. Otherwise you're of no use to us, to yourselves, or to anyone.

Mr. Schlesinger then proceeded to tell us how to be intelligent. What it amounted to, was for us to desert our principles and embrace his. At that point we would qualify as an "intelligent opposition."

A few months later Mr. Herbert Agar, writing in *Harper's Magazine*, came through with an article on almost precisely the same question, and suggesting exactly the same road for conservative salvation.

Now one would think that Mr. Schlesinger and Mr. Agar, and their disingenuous crusade for a renaissance of conservatism, would have been laughed off by our intelligent conservatives. Far from it. Perhaps there weren't enough intelligent conservatives who saw through this thinly disguised appeal for a two-party, one-platform political system. Either that, or there were enough intelligent men who saw through it, but they were not conservative. In any case, it is a matter of fact that the Liberals now control both the Democratic and the Republican parties, and mean to continue to do so, as, presumably, they mean also to continue to oppose each other "intelligently" on such questions as whether we ought to give away six billion dollars or only five and one-half billion, or whether federal social security ought to cover fifty million people or only forty-eight million, or whether the minimum wage ought to be one dollar or eighty-five cents.

The clearest exhibition I have seen—and at that one written by a right-wing Liberal—of the Liberal-political thought process appeared in the *New York Times* in an article by Mr. Arthur Krock in September, 1952, in the middle of the presidential election campaign. The night before, in Portland, Oregon, Adlai Stevenson had made a speech in which he chided editors and columnists throughout the country for committing themselves to supporting

(Continued on Page 60)

advent to power. The motive for this is not hatred or punishment, but the cold logic of the scientific necessity of their program to artificially control the evolution of the human species. When they come for you to give you the treatment, with your family, of course, that they have so graciously given to millions on the face of the earth, you can comfort yourself with the thought that you're dying in the interest of the scientific perfection of the human race. You may find that some comfort, but personally I find it none whatever.

Communism is the literal fulfillment of Psalm 14. The fool that said in his heart, "there is no God," and emerging from the tainted source of godlessness and scientific materialism, the exterminating avalanche of communism is sweeping the earth.

In the last analysis, communism originates in three things: (1) materialistic philosophy; (2) scientific technique; and (3) religious fanaticism. It must

"Communism does not arise where there is poverty. Communism arises out of a disease of modern capitalist society, particularly in the intelligentsia.... The Communists are always concerned with winning over the intellectuals, the opinion makers of society. Why is it so important to win over these people, even more important than to win over the trade unionists?... In a country like ours, where it is impossible, given the social structure, to have a mass Communist movement, the intellectual becomes extremely important as a means of spreading the party line.... What it comes down to is the need to set up echo chambers around the country, so that certain notions can enter general currency."

—Daniel Bell in *Jewish Labor Committee Outlook* (Autumn 1954). Quoted from J. B. Matthews in *American Mercury*, June 1955, p. 81.

be met in all phases of its advance. To meet it there is necessary, firstly, a vast educational campaign of the very nature and being of this deadly and malignant enemy, that a real understanding of the danger may penetrate the consciousness, not of the isolated few, but of the great majority of the freedom-loving people whose very existence is so desperately threatened. Out of this understanding, a scientific program, not merely to contain, but to defeat this enemy must be formed.

And, lastly, any such program is doomed to failure unless it rests upon a devoted people, dedicated to the spiritual values of our Christian civilization. Faith can only be matched by faith, passion by passion, and sacrifice by sacrifice. And communism presents a challenge to intelligent sacrificial devotion as the very cornerstone of liberty and survival.

The Liberal Mind

(Continued from Page 57)

Dwight Eisenhower "long before," said Stevenson, "they knew what this candidate stood for, or what his party platform would be, or who his opponent was, or what would be the issues of the campaign."

So Arthur Krock sat down to explain a few realities to Mr. Adlai Stevenson, and he did this by reminding him of the nine calculations made by the average Liberal editor the previous spring.

1. Last spring, it had become clear to everyone that the Republican party would nominate either Eisenhower or Taft. Moreover, it was clear that Taft opposed Truman's foreign policy.

2. On the other hand, it was clear that General Eisenhower went along with Truman's foreign policy.

3. If Truman wanted to, he could get himself nominated by the Democratic party. He might be facing Taft, the candidate of the Republican party. And, to quote Mr. Krock, 'signs were numerous that in a Taft-Truman contest the Senator would have an excellent chance of election.'

4. I quote 'To those who...believed (in Truman's foreign policy) the prospect of Taft as President was calamitous; and obviously the first and effective means of preventing this was the nomination of Eisenhower, the only other Republican who had a chance to be chosen by the party convention.'

5. But 'newspapers and individuals who held this opinion would have had small influence with the Republican National Convention unless they indicated they were prepared to back Eisenhower in the campaign if nominated.'

6. Other Democratic contenders were also weak, and, (7), Stevenson was saying he was not a contender for the nomination.

Therefore, (8), 'To those newspapers and citizens that wanted' Truman's foreign policy to be championed...the plain procedure was to attempt to assure this at the Republican convention (which came first) through the nomination of Eisenhower.'

And furthermore, (9), Stevenson ought to know this, as he too, surely, agrees that it would have been calamitous if Taft had got in.

This, in microcosm, is the Liberal primer on how to get your way no matter who wins. It's the political way of saying, heads I win, tails you lose. It is also a primer on how to end the two-party system in America. It is curious how much more successful the Liberals have been in their struggle against conservatives than in their struggle against Communists.

If what I say about the *Liberal* mind is true, what is in store for us? We know that politically the Liberals are too powerful for us to unseat, or at least I think they are. It follows that the Liberals will continue to preside over our war against communism, here and abroad. And, on the other hand, we know there is no chance whatever of changing the character of communism; so what is there left for us to do?

One attitude we might take, a highly tempting one as a matter of fact, is suggested by the answer made by a middle western farmer to an insurance man investigating a train wreck. The farmer was the sole witness, and he was asked to report exactly what he had seen.

"Well," he said, "I was plowing my field here when I saw the Twentieth Century Limited, over there on my right, moving along toward New York at about 80 miles an hour. Then I looked around and saw the Merchants Express going toward Chicago, at about 75 miles an hour. Then all of a sudden I realized they were on the same track."

"Well, what did you do about it?" the insurance agent said excitedly. "Did you try to flag one of them down, or to get the attention of the engineers in any way? What *did* you do!"

"I didn't do anything," said the farmer, "I just sat there and thought to myself, this is a hell of a way to run a railroad!"

In twenty years we have fought two wars and, in the larger sense, lost them both. As the direct result of our foreign policy we now face, at point blank range, the most formidable enemy civilization has ever faced. In the meantime a revolution has taken place in the United States. We are losing our freedom; we are trading it, recklessly, for an illusory security in behalf of which we continue, wantonly, to turn over to the central government year in and year out more and more of the power without which we cannot long remain free.

Perhaps it is true that, as Whittaker Chambers wrote me recently, "it is idle to talk about preventing the wreck of Western civilization. It is already a wreck from within. That is why we can hope to do little more now than snatch a fingernail of a saint from the rack or a handful of ashes from the faggots, and bury them secretly in a flowerpot against the day, ages hence, when a few men begin again to dare to believe that there was once something else, that something else is thinkable, and need some evidence of what it was, and the fortifying knowledge that there were those who, at the great nightfall, took loving thought to preserve the tokens of hope and truth." It's a hell of a way to run a country, all right. But perhaps we will gain strength from adversity; perhaps the knowledge of what we are responsible for will some day confront us, and frighten us, and reform us and make us wise; perhaps, even, God will take pity on us. Let us hope so.